

# Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*\*\* Change of Time \*\*\*\***

## **Terry Goddard to Present Arizona Association of Community Health Centers with \$142,400**

(Phoenix, Ariz. – August 5, 2005) Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard will present the Arizona Association of Community Health Centers with \$142,400 to support its efforts to provide medication and treatment to low income children and adults who suffer from asthma. The presentation will be held at Clinica Adelante Tidwell Family Center. The event will be held Tuesday, **August 9** at **Noon**.

Goddard will tour Clinica Adelante with Dr. Bradley Meek, Family Practice Physician and Director of the Asthma Collaborative. Clinica Adelante has joined with other organizations to provide outreach and treatment to uninsured and low income children and adults who have asthma.

The Center for Disease Control ranks Arizona fifth in the country for cases of diagnosed asthma. Goddard awarded \$356,000 to three community health programs to provide low income individuals with prescription drugs to treat asthma. In addition to the monies being presented to AACHC, the Arizona School-Based Health Care Council received \$142,400 and Phoenix Children's Hospital received \$70,000.

"The Community Health Centers are not for profit clinics which rely on collaborations with organizations that are committed to providing preventative health care for chronic diseases," said Joe Coatsworth, CEO of the Arizona Association of Community Health Centers said. "We are grateful to Attorney General Goddard for his interest in helping the children in Arizona who suffer from asthma."

"Prevention is the key to controlling asthma. Chronic asthma requires a daily regime of expensive medication, often for a lifetime. For those without prescription drug insurance coverage, many patients cannot afford to buy medication, thus placing them at serious risk." said Goddard.

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The funds for the Attorney General's Asthma Initiative come from a 2004 settlement with MEDCO Health Solutions, the largest pharmacy benefit management company in the United States. Arizona joined 19 other states in this settlement of deceptive trade practices claims, which totaled \$20 million nationwide. Arizona received \$600,000 in this settlement.

The lawsuit alleged that MEDCO encouraged pharmacies to switch patients to different prescription drugs but failed at times to pass on the resulting savings to patients or their health care plans. The drug switches generally benefited MEDCO despite the company's claims that they saved patients and health plans money. MEDCO did not tell prescribers or patients that the switches would increase rebate payments from drug manufacturers to MEDCO.

The settlement also required MEDCO to make important changes to its business practices so that patients and their doctors will make decisions about switching medications, not the pharmacy benefit company or the pharmacist.

"Arizona is fortunate to have a network of 36 Community Health Centers with 82 delivery sites providing primary health care to low income Arizonans in rural and underserved communities." Goddard said.

#### **Event Information:**

**What:** Press Conference/Check Presentation  
Arizona Association of Community Health Centers

**When:** Tuesday – August 9, 2005

**Time:** Noon

**Where:** Clinica Adelante  
Tidwell Family Care Center  
16560 N. Dysart Road  
Surprise, Arizona

For more information, please contact Andrea Esquer at 602-542-8019.

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